

MINUTES

2010 COMMISSION

August 20-21, 2007
Room 123-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Rochelle Chronister, Chairperson
Dr. Ray Daniels, Vice-Chairperson
Senator Jean Schodorf (August 20)
Representative Clay Aurand
Representative Sue Storm
Carolyn Campbell
Barb Hinton
Stephen Iliff
Dennis Jones
Emile McGill
Aaron Dunkel, *ex officio*
Jim Redmon, *ex officio*
Don Jordan, *ex officio*

Member Absent

Lee Urban

Staff Present

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michele Alishahi, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dianne Rosell, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Matt Todd, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas Department of Education
Janet Henning, Legislative Educational Planning Committee Assistant

Others Present

August 20

Senator Nick Jordan
Janet Schalansky, Kansas Children's Service League
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeyer, Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center
Mike Lewis, High Plains Education Cooperative No. 611
Sue Denny, Blue Valley USD 229

Wendy Webb, Blue Valley, USD 229
Nancy Keel, Kansas Parents As Teachers Association
Robert Coleman, ANW Education Cooperative
Neil Guthrie, Wichita, USD 259
Betsy Hineman, Dighton Parents as Teachers
Mary Baskett, Director Kansas Head Start Association
Dr. Martina M. Thompson, Topeka Public Schools
Doug Bowman, Kansas Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services
Melissa Ness, Kansas Children's Cabinet
Roxanne Brotsky, USD 261, Parents as Teachers Coordinator
Phyllis Mosher, Licensed Family Child Care Provider, Topeka
Brenda Day, Licensed Family Child Care Provider, Linn County
Linda Chancellor, Family Child Care Provider, Miami County
Linda Kenney, Kansas Department of Health and Environment
Rita Gedney, Heartland Programs, Salina
Preston D. Goering, Harvey County Health Department
Patricia Hunter, Junction City-Geary County Health Department
Susan Wilson, Healthy Babies, Sedgwick County Health Department
Nancy Jorn, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department
Leslie Campbell, Pottawatomie County Health Department
Dodie Wellshear, United School Administrators of Kansas
Tiffany Smith-Birk, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services-
Health Care Policy-Mental Health
Christina Ostmeyer
Nancy Lewis, High Plains Education Cooperative No. 611
Rebecca Gillam, University of Kansas
Stephanie Wallie, University of Kansas
Erin Obermeier, University of Kansas
Luella Sanders, United Way of the Plains/Wichita
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education
Gina McDonald, Kansas Children's Service League
Theresa Weigel, USD 435, Abilene Parents as Teachers
LoNell Keeler, USD 306, SE Saline
Norma Betts, Licensed Child Care Provider, Wyandotte County
Jane Carter, Kansas CCPT, AFSCME
Ceolia Witt, Licensed Family Child Care Provider, Wyandotte County
Mildred Slaughter, Licensed Family Child Care Provider, Wyandotte County
Debbie Mai, Rainbows United, Inc.
Karen Roberts, Manhattan-Ogden USD 383
Pam Russell, Manhattan-Ogden, USD 383
Katie Firebaugh, Kearney & Associates
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools
Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Education Association
Carolyn Weinhold, Head Start - State Collaboration
Kathy Cook, Kansas Families for Education
Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools
Mike Reecht, K12, Inc.
Paul Woods, SRS
Martin Hawver, Hawver's Capitol Report
Dave Ranney, Kansas Health Institute
Bill Brady, Schools for Fair Funding
Sara Spinks, KACHD
Margaret R. Goering, Harvey County Health Department
Jackie Counts, University of Kansas

Scott Frank, Kansas Legislative Post Audit

August 21

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education
Dr. John Morton, Superintendent Newton USD 373
Dr. John Heim, Emporia USD 253
Dr. David Brax, Buhler USD 313
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Gary Price, Pittsburg USD 250
Dr. John Burke, Haysville USD 261
Bill Hall, Ulysses USD 214
Mary Devin, Kansas Educational Leadership Commission
Robert Schieb, WaKeeney USD 208
Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Education Association
Mike Wilson, Associate Superintendent, Topeka USD 501
Dr. Jill Shackelford, Superintendent, Kansas City School District
J.D. Rios, Human Resource Director, Kansas City School District
Leadell Ediger, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Child Care Resource
and Referral Agencies
Representative Melvin Neufeld, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Jean Friend, Syracuse USD 494
Patty Gray, Kansas State Department of Education
Colleen Riley, Kansas State Department of Education
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education
Gina McDonald, Kansas Children's Service League
Jack Williamson, Kansas National Education Association
Marjie Blaufuss, Kansas National Education Association
Gayle Stuber, Kansas State Department of Education
Angela Stallbaumer, Kansas Association of School Boards
Jeff Arpin, Division of Budget
Katie Firebaugh, Kearney & Associates
Mike Reeht, Gaches Braden
Ron Harbaugh, Topeka Public Schools
Dodie Wellshear, United School Administrators of Kansas
Cheryl Semmel, United School Administrators of Kansas
Patrick Woods, Social and Rehabilitation Services
Kevin Shepard, Interlocal No. 607
Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas, Public Schools
Mark Evans, Andover Public Schools
Stuart Little, Shawnee Mission USD 512
Larry Wheeler, Kansas State Department of Education
Robert Blaufuss, Kansas National Education Association
Greg Jones, Kansas National Education Association Uni-Serv, Wichita
Elton Argo, Kismat/Plains USD 483
Bill Brady, Schools for Fair Funding
Howard Shuler, Kansas State Department of Education
Kathy Boyer, Kansas State Department of Education
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools

**Monday, August 20
Morning Session**

The meeting of the 2010 Commission was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Rochelle Chronister.

Open Hearing on Early Childhood Program Realignment and Coordination Proposal

Senator Nick Jordan addressed the Commission members regarding early childhood education and services. Senator Jordan stated Kansas has a fragmented system for early childhood education and services. The K-12 Task Force, and ultimately the Legislature and Governor determined that an Office of Early Childhood Education and Services is needed. Senator Jordan suggested the Office of Early Childhood Education and Services be established in the Department of Education for early childhood education programs with “dotted lines” to other agencies. Health and social service programs would remain in current agencies with a “dotted line” responsibility to transfer data that would be helpful in establishing programs for early childhood education. In addition, there are a number of programs that have multiple emphases including education, health, and social services; however, addressing these may require further discussions to determine how to fit them into an integrated plan (Attachment 1).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Janet Schalansky, President/CEO of Kansas Children’s Service League, gave an overview of the Kansas Children’s Service League (KCSL). She stated that KCSL is a not-for-profit agency serving children and families across the state. Today, KCSL provides statewide coverage for many different programs and the services available in each community vary according to the communities’ needs.

KCSL manages the Head Start and Kansas Early Head Start programs in 13 western Kansas counties; employs 110 people; and provides services to over 575 children. Those programs provide services in the home with families as well as center-based training for children.

KCSL also manages Pre-K programs in Sedgwick and Reno counties and is working on expanding that program into four additional counties. These programs require collaboration with local partners, especially schools.

KCSL provides Healthy Families programs in Wyandotte, Johnson, Shawnee, and Reno counties and works with community partners to obtain match money for the Healthy Families programs.

Ms. Schalansky stated the Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund has been a leader in moving children’s agendas in a positive direction. However, with less than two full-time equivalent positions, it would seem difficult to manage the number of programs suggested by the “draft plan.” KCSL would support giving the Children’s Cabinet Board and staff planning time and resources they will need to carry out the vision (Attachment 2).

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), addressed Commission members on early childhood education. Mr. Tallman stated that if Americans are going to compete with the rising educational standards of the rest of the world, a high school diploma is simply not enough. Between 10 and 20 percent of Kansas students fail to graduate from high school in four years and many high school graduates fail to complete further educational programs. KASB recommends:

- Commit to funding Parents as Teachers to eliminate waiting lists, and allow this program to be a point of first contact for parents, through home visits, and link families with other social services.
- Use the school finance system model to provide base funding per child for preschool programs, just as has been done with the four-year-old at-risk program.
- Fund all-day kindergarten, which will allow districts to either begin full-day services or shift funding they currently are using from other sources to increase “at-risk” programs to other grade levels, especially at the high school level.

Mr. Tallman told Commission members that if the primary purpose of early childhood programs is to help children gain the skills they need to function as effective and productive citizens, then KASB believes the leading responsibility for these programs should be given to the Department of Education and local school districts.

He further stated this does not mean that all early childhood programs must be administered directly by local school districts or must be the same everywhere in Kansas. KASB believes school districts should be able to offer early childhood programs directly or in cooperation with other providers.

Local control and flexibility should not imply the state has no control over program quality or outcomes. Expanded funding will likely be contingent on a high level of accountability and quality assurance. KASB believes any program receiving public funding must meet state standards. Also standards should be based primarily on state outcomes.

Although the benefits of early childhood programs are abundant, KASB does not believe that such programs should be required ([Attachment 3](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeyer, Director Special Education/Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, told Commission members that as an administrator working in both Part C (*tiny-k*) and Part B (Special Education) programs, she recommends that the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) would best meet the needs of children and their families. The U.S. Department of Education serves as the lead agency for Part C and many of the newly authorized initiatives coming from the federal government are birth to five years old-oriented. Because KSDE works with the U.S. Department of Education routinely on other issues, it seems likely a duplication of service within Kansas would be reduced ([Attachment 4](#)).

Mike Lewis, Director of High Plains Education Cooperative No. 611, told Commission members that as Director of a Cooperative which covers 10,000 square miles in southwest Kansas, meeting the needs of each child in every community is at times very challenging. The task is made easier with support from the local school districts and the infrastructure of the Kansas State Department of Education ([Attachment 5](#)).

Sue Denny, Executive Director of Student Services, Blue Valley USD 229, spoke to Commission members and said one of the strongest systems we have in Kansas is our educational system. It is her recommendation to place the administration of all Special Education Services from birth forward within the Department of Education. A further recommendation is to place the administration of Parents as Teachers (PAT) with the Department of Education ([Attachment 6](#)).

Wendy Webb, Coordinator, Blue Valley PAT and President of Kansas Parents as Teachers Association, told Commission members that Kansas, as other states, has realized there is no one-size-fits-all approach that can be adopted quickly or easily to address early childhood and school readiness concerns. Kansas Parents as Teachers programs are required to annually survey families regarding their satisfaction with the services provided. Ms. Webb stated that in all their years, PAT has never dropped below a 90 percent satisfaction rating. Ms. Webb recommended that PAT continue its longstanding relationship with the Kansas State Department of Education and the local school board of education and community (Attachment 7).

Nancy Keel, Kansas Parents as Teachers Association, testified that last year all of the programs, using a PAT curriculum, served over 18,000 children in Kansas. The programs using a PAT curriculum represent KSDE, SRS, and KDHE. Many parents in these programs do not realize how all of these programs work together, they just know they are getting home visits with timely information and valuable resources for their children and family. For many years the importance of seamless services to families with children prenatal to kindergarten has been emphasized. KSDE PAT, by statute, is a part of education's seamless service. PAT research indicates that getting parents involved with their children's education from the very beginning, including prenatally, helps parents stay involved after their children enter school (Attachment 8).

Robert Coleman, Director ANW Education Cooperative, stated that the Kansas State Department of Education must have primary supervision of all programs providing special education. And it should be noted that special education services are provided to students in Head Start and in the Infant-Toddler (*tiny-k*) programs (Attachment 9).

Neil Guthrie, Wichita School District, told Commission members the Wichita Public Schools support the appointment of the Kansas State Department of Education as the lead agency for Part C with the most important reason being oversight and accountability. He also stated another reason was to bring continuity and a family-friendly approach to the service delivery system for children with special needs (Attachment 10).

A question and answer session followed after all of the presentations.

Betsy Hineman, Dighton PAT Coordinator, gave written testimony in support of the appointment of the Kansas State Department of Education as the lead agency for Part C (Attachment 11).

Chairperson Chronister asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of July 30-31, 2007. *Dennis Jones moved to accept the minutes as recorded. The motion was seconded by Carolyn Campbell. The motion carried.*

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office, gave a report to Commission members on the Attorney General's opinion concerning the establishment of an office of early childhood education. The Attorney General opined that without knowing the precise types of programs and services that would be undertaken by the office of early childhood education, it would be impossible to determine if the Constitution requires placement under the supervision of the State Board of Education (Attachment 12).

Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools USD 259, explained to Commission members that United Teachers of Wichita filed a prohibitive practice against the District last year challenging the Wichita Board of Education's decision to administratively issue a \$1,500 bonus to certain certified staff members. The hearing officer agreed the District had the right to issue a bonus under statute without negotiating the item (Attachments 13 and 14).

Chairperson Chronister distributed an article to Commission members from the *Lawrence Journal World* entitled, "*Teachers Want Pay Tied to Test Scores*" (Attachment 15).

Afternoon Session

Open Hearing on Early Childhood Program Realignment and Coordination Proposal (Continued)

Doug Bowman, Coordinator, Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services, told Commission members the Council had met briefly to discuss the preliminary proposal for re-aligning early childhood programs. In the opinion of the Council, the principal issue not addressed by the preliminary proposal is sufficient resources. Neither local education agencies nor local *tiny-k* networks have received appropriations that have kept pace with the numbers of persons they are required to serve, or the cost of the services they are required to provide. The preliminary proposal not only does not address funding needs, but it proposes significant changes and poses complex questions that cannot be possibly answered in the near future (Attachment 16).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Dr. Martina Thompson, Director of Early Childhood, Topeka Public Schools, told Commission members that USD 501 Topeka supports early childhood programs through a variety of funding sources. State and federal dollars constitute well over 75 percent of the funding for existing programs that include Parents as Teachers, Four-Year Old At-Risk, and Sheldon Head Start. Each of these programs has an educational focus and, with the exception of the federally funded Head Start Program, should be administered by the Kansas Department of Education (Attachment 17).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Melissa Ness, Chairperson, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, told Commission members there were a number of questions/concerns that needed to be addressed. Although she was pleased with the dialogue among the conferees, Ms. Ness told Commission members that the Children's Cabinet does not have ownership in the construct or infrastructure regarding how services should be delivered. The Children's Cabinet has a good structure but does not have a good infrastructure. Questions to be answered:

- Are we looking for efficiency in service?
- Are we looking for shared resources?
- Are we looking for coordination?
- What are we trying to accomplish through a program realignment proposal?
- What are the areas of consensus?

Currently, the Children's Cabinet can make recommendations about the Children's Initiative Fund and also has further oversight over Smart Start, local child abuse prevention grants, and Pre-K pilots. But the Children's Cabinet only has authority and involvement with only 3 percent of the early learning budget in the State of Kansas.

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Mary Baskett, Director, Kansas Head Start Association, gave an overview of the Kansas Head Start Association (KHSA). KHSA supports all 28 Kansas Head Start programs through professional education, advocacy, and special projects. KHSA is helping to build school-ready children and self-sufficient families. Head Start operates in 87 Kansas counties and Early Head Start is in 48 counties. Head Start serves about 3 in 5 eligible three-to-five year olds while Early Head Start reaches 1 in 20 eligible infants and toddlers. Ninety percent of the families in these programs have incomes at or below the federal poverty level.

Ms. Baskett told Commission members that the proposed structure, as outlined by the 2010 Commission, has many positives; however, there are considerations which should be given to proposing a reorganization of early learning governance. It was suggested the Commission should be looking for solutions that better integrate and synthesize existing structures, making each more accountable and productive. A review of enhanced coordination with a focus on leadership was suggested because there is no "one size fits all" solution for any state.

Ms. Baskett stressed there is definite room for improvement to meet positive changes for kids but, unlike other states, Kansas is not in crisis ([Attachment 18](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Roxanne Brotsky, USD 261, Parents as Teachers Coordinator, addressed Commission members and stated that Parents as Teachers as well as other early intervention programs such as *tiny-k* belong in the Department of Education. There are three categories which justify this position:

- Cost benefits;
- Support benefits; and
- Benefits to families and children.

Research has shown that families involved in PAT are much more likely to be involved in their child's education than non-PAT families. Local school districts know their population better than a central agency would and they are more likely to be attuned to the level of services needed in their community. PAT was designed to be an education program and continues that vision today. Families and children clearly benefit in many ways from the link between PAT and the Department of Education ([Attachment 19](#)).

Phyllis Mosher, family child care provider, told Commission members that Kansas family child care providers are able to provide a unique alternative to the typical child care center. Because their businesses are also their homes, family providers have the flexibility of offering care on variable schedules to accommodate the non-traditional and ever-changing schedules of the average low-income worker. However, as small business owners, family child care providers are faced with increasing costs, high turnover, and few protections under the law. Ms. Mosher asked Commission members to include the family child care providers in their decision process ([Attachment 20](#)).

Brenda Day, family child care provider, shared her concerns regarding the child care system and early childhood programs with Commission members. Ms. Day stated families must pay too much for child care, often more than they can afford. Quality child care is in short supply in many areas and reimbursement rates for child care providers are out of compliance with federal guidelines. She also stated that family child care providers do not receive any employment benefits of any kind ([Attachment 21](#)).

Linda Chancellor, family child care provider, gave Commission members an overview of family child care provider issues:

- Unclear and outdated regulations;
- Low reimbursement rates; and
- Unfair and inconsistent inspection practices.

Although family child care providers are working with SRS and KDHE to resolve these issues to make the process more provider friendly, Ms. Chancellor stated the state cannot guarantee that it is providing low-income families with equal access to quality child care programs when rates have remained stagnant. Stagnant reimbursement rates, long hours, and lack of benefits are contributors to the high turnover in this field ([Attachment 22](#)).

Linda Kenney, Director, Bureau of Family Health, Department of Health and Environment, told Commission members that her Department comments were only on the proposal as it affects the Healthy Start Home Visitor Program (HSHV). The HSHV program is funded through Maternal and Child Health (MCH) grants provided to local health departments to enable them to provide outreach visits to pregnant women and families with newborns. The HSHV services are one component of the MCH local health department grant, along with Maternal and Infant Health services and Child Health services. The Healthy Start portion of the MCH grants to local health departments is about 25 percent or \$1 million of a total of approximately \$4 million in MCH grants to local health departments. The Healthy Start program has always been a health program with emphasis on prenatal and postnatal care. KDHE believes the Healthy Start Home Visitor Program best fits under the state health department ([Attachment 23](#)).

Linda Gedney, Program Coordinator for Heartland Programs, told Commission members that Heartland Programs has been in existence for 17 years and includes Head Start, special education, state-funded, At-Risk Preschool, Early Head Start, Parents as Teachers, and the local health department. Ms. Gedney advised she has been a part of the Early Learning Coordinating Council (ELCC) for several years and stated the ELCC is an inclusive group of key stakeholders involved in early childhood programs.

The Kansas Early Childhood Comprehensive System Plan put out by the ELCC is a comprehensive approach to raising successful children. The plan is organized into five goals to provide children birth through five with the resources they need to succeed in school and life. The Plan looks at the whole child as well as the family and includes health, mental health and social/emotional development, early care and education, parent education, and family supports.

Ms. Gedney stressed the importance of including the involvement of the ELCC in the decision making process for an early childhood governance structure ([Attachment 24](#)).

Preston Goering, Assistant Director of Administrative Services, Harvey County Health Department, spoke to Commission members on the proposed realignment and coordination of early childhood programs, specifically the Healthy Start Program, as viewed from a county health department perspective. Mr. Goering stated the Healthy Start Home Visitors Program in this county is based on a medical model involving doctors, obstetricians, registered nurses, and dietitians. The Healthy Start Home Visitor Program is connected to the many other important services offered at the Health Department, and is rooted in an extensive referral system centered in the Health Department and extending throughout the community.

The Healthy Start Home Visitors Program provides education and support to pregnant women and families with a child, birth through five years. The fact that the Healthy Start Home Visitor Program is in the Health Department reinforces the medical model because it augments the range of medical and health services available to mothers and infants and provides crucial connections to the medical community ([Attachment 25](#)).

Patricia Hunter, President-Elect of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD), told Commission members that KALHD supports the Healthy Start Home Visitor Program as it is presently based within the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Program under the Bureau of Family Health, Kansas Department of Health and Environment. The HSHV is one component of several health-related services offered through the MCH Program. Shifting the HSHV Program to a separate state agency will fragment health services and impose new challenges for coordinating these health services at the community level. Local health departments receiving the MCH grant are required to provide a 40 percent local match in dollars, and many provide more than the required match to meet the needs in their counties.

Ms. Hunter said the Maternal Child Health Program, which includes the HSHV Program, delivers Perinatal Services to high-risk mothers and infants through a multi-disciplinary approach that has improved the medical, environmental and psycho-social stressors that are associated with poor pregnancy outcomes. This comprehensive approach is what makes the program successful in communities regardless of their demographics. Fragmenting the MCH Program would compromise the effectiveness of this outreach component ([Attachment 26](#)).

Susan Wilson, Director, Healthy Babies Program, Sedgwick County Health Department, told Commission members of her concern that the movement of the MCH Healthy Start Home Visitor Program from KDHE to the Children's Cabinet would not only decrease funding, but that it also would change the health and prevention emphasis of the program. The Sedgwick County Health Department's Healthy Babies Program is funded in part via MCH Healthy Start Home Visitor funding and is the only Nurse Home Visitation Program. While the Healthy Babies Program is supportive of any initiative that might streamline service delivery to moms at high risk for poor birth outcomes, the Department wants to ensure those proposed changes will not distract from the program's health focus nor will funds be redirected from a program that is already underfunded ([Attachment 27](#)).

Nancy Jorn, Director of Maternal Child Health Field Programs, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, addressed the Commission members regarding the proposal to move oversight of the Kansas Healthy Start Program from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to the Children's Cabinet. In Kansas, Healthy Start was designed as a perinatal program. There is some variation among Kansas Healthy Start programs based on individual community needs and resources. To unlink Healthy Start from the comprehensive perinatal health system based at the local and state health departments does not make programmatic or fiscal sense.

Therefore, Ms. Jorn encouraged the Commission to leave the Healthy Start program under the administrative oversight of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment with implementation by local health departments ([Attachment 28](#)).

Leslie Campbell, Pottawatomie County Health Department, shared comments and concerns with Commission members regarding the realignment and coordination proposal being discussed and specifically the Healthy Start Home Visitor Program. She stressed the purpose of the program is to support and educate pregnant women and families with newborns to reduce the incidence of child abuse, neglect, infant mortality, and increase preventive health services. Ms. Campbell said the Healthy Start Program is unique, and its funding should continue to come to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. The program does not have the same philosophy or goals of Early Childhood Development Programs. If funding for this program were to move to early childhood programs, the local Health Department would be left without resources to impact at-risk families. Maintaining an effective Maternal and Child program at the local level would be compromised by this change ([Attachment 29](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

Commission Discussion Regarding Early Childhood Programming

Dr. Ray Daniels, Commission member, gave a proposal to Commission members for creating a Division for Early Childhood Education within the Kansas State Department of Education ([Attachment 30](#)). Commissioner Daniels explained that his proposal would locate all early childhood programs that had an education component under the umbrella of KSDE.

A question and answer session followed the presentation of the proposal. Several Commission members indicated that they favored Commissioner Daniels' proposal. Then various Commission members made the following comments concerning early childhood programming:

- In determining the realignment of early childhood programs, how does one define education as opposed to health and social services?
- Perhaps an overall coordinating body, with equal representation from the education, health, and social services arenas, should be changed to address the issue of realigning and coordinating early childhood programs in the state, since they are the experts in this area.
- Serious consideration should be given to the definition of coordination at the state level when devising a plan.

The Chairperson announced the next meeting of the 2010 Commission would be Tuesday, August 21, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 123-S of the Statehouse.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Tuesday, August 21 Morning Session

The meeting of the 2010 Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Rochelle Chronister.

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education

Dr. Alexa Posny, Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education, told Commission members the overall goal of the State Board of Education is to ensure that all students meet or exceed high academic standards and that they are prepared for their next steps, whether it be the work world or postsecondary education.

Dr. Posny told Commission members we have a different world for which we are preparing our children. In five years, 76 million people who are "baby boomers" will want to retire, but coming up behind are only 45 million people to take the place of all those people who are leaving and this is known as the "baby bust." By 2011, there will be 4 million more jobs than workers and if we do not do something about this by 2030, 30 million unfilled jobs are possible.

Dr. Posny said it is known that what we are preparing kids for are jobs that require education beyond high school. Forty percent of all new jobs require at least an associate's degree and thirty percent of all new jobs require postsecondary education with less than an associate's degree.

Kansas has a graduation rate of 90.2 percent which compares very favorably to the national average.

In Kansas, 42 percent of the teachers leave the teaching field after seven years. Fifty-one percent of reported licensed personnel are over 45, and 36 percent are over 50. Of the 43,000 teachers needed in Kansas, as of June 2007, there were 1,144 teacher vacancies.

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Open Hearing on Teacher Shortages and Public School Finance

Dr. John Morton, Superintendent, USD 373, gave a synopsis of a survey entitled, "*The Impact of the KPERs Surcharge on Kansas School Districts: District Survey Results*" (Attachments 31 and 32).

Dr. John Heim, Superintendent, Emporia USD 253, spoke to Commission members of the teacher shortage crisis in Kansas. Dr. Heim suggested the following be considered:

- Market the profession by developing a marketing campaign for teaching in Kansas.
- Provide assistance to local districts to encourage high school students to consider teaching as a profession.
- Provide seed money for local districts to develop "Grow Your Own" programs.
- Help students who dream of becoming teachers and then pay them a fair and adequate salary when they become teachers.
- Set a goal of paying Kansas teachers in the top third of the country.
- Develop a statewide loan forgiveness program that provides 100 percent forgiveness for selected individuals who stay in the profession in Kansas for at least five years.
- Develop flexible retirement plans, *i.e.*, phased retirement opportunities and retiree return plans (Attachment 33).

Dr. David Brax, Superintendent, Buhler USD 313, spoke of the teacher shortage crisis in Kansas and how it has impacted his school district. He told Commission members of the teacher turnover rate which is approximately 16 percent annually, with almost 10 percent of Kansas teachers leaving the public school system each year. The remaining teachers move between schools, with a definitive migration pattern from western to eastern Kansas.

Dr. Brax told Commission members that nearly five years ago his school district began offering bonuses to those teachers who provided advance notice of their intention to retire. Teachers who announce plans to retire by February 1 receive a one-time \$500 bonus.

In addition, the Buhler school district has realized it cannot adequately compete for teachers within Kansas and now has plans to actively recruit in states where there appears to be a surplus of graduates.

Buhler USD 313 also has an exemplary mentor program for teachers new to the district. Mentor teachers are given \$1,000 the first year for teachers new to the profession with a \$500 compensation for the second year. Mentors also are paid \$500 for one year to mentor teachers who are experienced but new to the district (Attachment 34).

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), told Commission members the issues of teacher shortages and school finance are inextricably linked, because funding is required to train, pay, and support teachers and administrators, and because both are components of the larger issue of student achievement. He further states that over the past ten years, funding for higher student achievement has come from two primary factors: state funding for targeted areas and increases in the Local Option Budget.

Mr. Tallman told Commission members the KASB respectfully suggests the 2010 Commission offer the following recommendations to the Legislature:

- Either commit to pay for the outcomes you want, or change the outcomes to fit what you are willing to pay.
- Increase funding for early childhood programs and all-day kindergarten.
- Recognize that base budget per pupil increases of \$50 to \$60 are simply inadequate.
- Use the upcoming year to overhaul the tax mix used to fund education.
- Remove the election requirement for Local Option Budgets.
- Continue to increase funding for both poverty-based and non-poverty-based at-risk programs.
- Lower the mileage threshold for transportation aid.
- Expand incentives such as service scholarships for teachers and administrators serving in shortage or high needs areas.
- Expand support for district programs for new teacher mentoring and other induction efforts, as well as “grown your own” teacher and administrator development programs.
- Fund the state professional development program at the statutorily authorized level, especially as demands for staff training continue to increase.
- Give local districts more flexibility to hire or “license” individuals who may lack certain college credentials but can demonstrate improvement in student achievement.
- Recommend the Kansas State Board of Education modify the policy of giving exclusive authority for determining educational content requirements for licensure to teacher and administrator training institutions.

- Eliminate the KPERS “surcharge” on districts that hire employees who have retired from other districts, especially in cases of geographic or subject area shortage.

Mr. Tallman also stated KASB would be very skeptical about the idea of “adding a year” to the three-year plan so school funding is always one year ahead because such a decision would be made before consensus revenue estimates were done ([Attachment 35](#)).

Gary Price, Superintendent, Pittsburg USD 250, told Commission members the issue of the availability of qualified teachers is widely recognized as a concern for Kansas public schools for the remainder of this decade and the foreseeable future. He addressed this issue as the new three “R’s” – Recruitment, Retention, and Retirement.

Strategies for Recruitment:

- Increase the Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) to provide funding for competitive salaries for beginning teachers.
- Provide additional state aid and allow differentiated pay to recruit teachers for hard-to-fill positions.
- Fund student loan cancellation programs that are already in effect but need to be funded at a level to solve teacher shortages in hard-to-fill positions.
- Encourage and financially support grow-your-own teacher programs that allow local districts to support teacher education programs for high school graduates to return to the community and teach.
- Encourage continuation of funding public schools at least one year in advance so districts may adequately plan for and recruit new teachers in the district.

Strategies for Retention:

- Increase the BSAPP to provide funding for competitive salaries for experienced teachers.
- Fully fund the teacher mentor law.
- Fully fund professional development for all teachers.

Strategies for Retirement:

- Abolish or significantly increase the \$20,000 threshold that prohibits teachers from retiring and working in the same district.
- Consider other methods to assist the KPERS actuarial future rather than the 15 percent penalty applied to the salaries of retirees who return to work in Kansas schools.

- Assist retirees under the current KPERs system by providing an annual COLA adjustment that alleviates the deterioration of retirement benefits over time.
- Support districts in efforts to move from local after-retirement benefit plans (Early Retirement Plans) to pre-funded retirement plans such as matching 403b plans ([Attachment 36](#)).

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Dr. John Burke, Superintendent, Haysville USD 261, addressed the Commission members and told of issues and concerns in his school district. Dr. Burke told Commission members that in 2007, there are 64 new teachers in the Haysville school district, which is a 68 percent increase in teachers hired compared to the student population, which increased 4 percent. In order to be competitive, the school district has issued signing bonuses, had an aggressive campaign in recruiting teachers including overseas, purchased new laptops for teachers, proposed the “grow-our-own” program, and given retention incentives in lieu of early retirement incentives ([Attachment 37](#)).

Bill Hall, Superintendent, Ulysses USD 214, told Commission members of the concerns regarding recruitment of teachers to school districts in southwest Kansas. He stated that many teaching positions for schools in southwest Kansas went unfilled or required the hiring of long-term substitutes as a stop-gap measure. While there are more vacancies and fewer teachers in certain hard-to-fill areas such as math, science, and music, the case can be made that school districts in western Kansas are experiencing severe shortages of teachers across all levels.

Mr. Hall urged Commission members to consider the adoption of any or all of the following options:

- Allow districts to hire back their own KPERs retirees for hard-to-fill positions with no salary limitations or penalty payments.
- Cancel student loans.
- Offer more competitive teacher salaries.
- Provide financial support for “grow-your-own” programs.
- Allow more flexibility in teacher licensure regulations and alternative licensing programs ([Attachment 38](#)).

Robert Scheib, Superintendent, WaKeeney USD 208, shared concerns and critical issues in his school district with Commission members. Mr. Scheib said his school district has experienced catastrophic declining enrollment for six years and to compensate, the total certified staff has been reduced by 4.5 certified positions.

He also told Commission members that in the high school, there are numerous single teacher departments, and if a teacher cannot be found for any of those positions, then that program is not available for students.

Mr. Scheib said void department offerings in small schools and isolated rural districts brings to light a statement made by the Schools for Quality Education Board of Directors in October 2006, “that every teacher in small and rural schools is a high-needs teacher. The ability to recruit quality teachers in our districts is becoming harder each day. Whichever teacher leaves last becomes the

high-needs teacher in our districts at that point. Perhaps some work needs to be addressed in certification, instead of additional funding in this area.” ([Attachment 39](#)).

Afternoon Session

Mary Devin, Co-Chairperson of the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission, gave an overview of the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission. She stated the Kansas Educational Leadership Commission was created to guide the establishment of a cohesive, research-based system of leadership development for Kansas educators.

The purpose of the Commission will be to focus on recent research and evidence-based practices that point to the critical role leadership plays in the success of student learning and the achievement of effective student results. The Commission also is charged with studying research and evidence-based practices in the development of educational leaders ([Attachment 40](#)).

Terry Forsyth, Kansas National Education Association, spoke to Commission members, discussing potential remedies for the problem of teacher recruitment and retention in Kansas.

Mr. Forsyth said that teacher mentoring is critical in the retention of new teachers, and KNEA supports the teacher mentoring law and agrees that it should be fully funded. While the law provides for a stipend for the mentor teacher, it does not provide funding for other important elements in a teacher mentoring program. Districts need funds to support time for the new teacher and mentor to collaborate.

Quality professional development is critical support for teachers and is long overdue.

Base State Aid Per Pupil is the primary source for teacher salaries, and Kansas simply must address teacher salaries. We must be competitive, not just with teacher salaries in other states, but also with private sector salaries. At the same time, by not fully funding programs, *i.e.*, special education and all-day kindergarten, the desire to provide the programs our children need must be balanced with the need to professionalize teacher salaries.

KNEA supports student loan forgiveness. It is appropriate and legitimate to exchange loan forgiveness for service to our children.

KNEA has a number of concerns regarding proposals about KPERS, including the “surcharge.”

With regard to “hard-to-fill” positions, KNEA does not believe it is appropriate for the state to make provision for a few teachers to get additional compensation without regard to the local negotiations process. KNEA does not object to differentiated pay structures provided that such structures are negotiated locally; and therefore, have the support of both the local board of education and the teachers' association. Well-known advocates of differentiated pay argue that such systems generally fail for two reasons. The “bonus” is rarely large enough to generate excitement and bonuses within a system of generally low-paid employees only cause resentment.

Mr. Forsyth told Commission members it would make more sense to fund districts in a flexible manner so that districts would work within their bargaining parameters to solve the problem. KNEA would oppose any suggestion that would take salaries out of the bargaining agreement.

Mr. Forsyth stated there are plenty of talented para-professionals in our schools who would make marvelous teachers; however, it is difficult for them to return to school to earn their degrees. “Grow-your-own” programs that are cooperative efforts between school districts and teacher training programs are a great way to make returning to college both possible and cost-effective while maintaining quality ([Attachment 41](#)).

Mike Wilson, Associate Superintendent, Topeka Public Schools, shared concerns and issues of the school district with Commission members. He stated the district had eight certified openings at the beginning of this school year. The school district has tried several avenues to help with the recruitment of teachers, including a \$2,000 bonus paid to teachers that are hired in special needs areas. For the past three years, school administrators have traveled to foreign countries to actively recruit teachers, and the school district currently has 28 foreign teachers that possess valid visas and teacher certificates. Nine of these teachers are teaching special education and most of the others are teaching in the areas of math and science.

Mr. Wilson recommended the Kansas State Department of Education encourage and sign agreements with certain countries that have the ability to produce good teachers and also provide more scholarships to college students who want to major in the educational areas of math, science, special education, and foreign languages. He also recommended the Legislature should fund a stipend to teachers in the critical needs area ([Attachment 42](#)).

Teacher Shortages

John (J.D.) Rios, Assistant Superintendent of Community and Human Resources, Kansas City, Kansas, Public Schools, told Commission members our poorest, most vulnerable students – those who most need our assistance – are least likely to attend schools with fully qualified staff members. If educators and policy makers are truly committed to closing the achievement gap, we must work together to close the staffing gap. The main source of the problem is that the supply of new teachers is insufficient to keep up with the demand. Teaching also is an occupation that loses many of its newly trained members very early in their careers.

Mr. Rios stated of those who leave because of job dissatisfaction, most link their departure to several key factors: low salaries, lack of support from the school administration, student discipline problems, and lack of influence over school decision-making. He further stated the Kansas City, Kansas, school district has found a strong link between participation by beginning teachers in induction and mentoring programs and their likelihood of remaining with the district after their first year on the job ([Attachment 43](#)).

Early Childhood Program in Kansas City

Dr. Jill Shackelford, Superintendent, Kansas City, Kansas, Public Schools, gave a Power Point presentation of the Kansas City, Kansas, Public Schools ([Attachment 44](#)).

Leadell Ediger, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (KACCRRRA), gave an overview of the KACCRRRA organization. Ms. Ediger provided insights from the provider community regarding how Kansas can create a structure that meets the needs of Kansas children.

Ms. Ediger stressed to Commission members that it takes time not only for planning but for implementation of new governance structures. The average is two years from planning to operation but several states have taken three years.

The 2010 Commission may want to take a closer look at the Children's Cabinet Early Learning Coordinating Committee, as that group, if given the latitude and resources, could be utilized in this newly contemplated structure. She also related that SRS does a very good job of distributing the subsidies for child care for children under five.

Ms. Ediger told Commission members that private child care providers need to be included in the discussions of the 2010 Commission. Private providers offer parents choice and flexibility in meeting the early education needs of their families ([Attachment 45](#)).

Representative Melvin Neufeld – Early Childhood Education Considerations

Representative Melvin Neufeld, Speaker of the House of Representatives, spoke to Commission members of early childhood education considerations. Regarding Kansas' early childhood programs, Speaker Neufeld remarked that "we have a multiplicity of programs with large gaps, leaving people unserved." Speaker Neufeld also stressed the importance of the prenatal period in successful early childhood development.

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Commission Discussion of Teacher Shortages and Public School Finance

Barb Hinton, Legislative Post Audit, distributed a draft proposal which included a framework for thinking about creating an Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) and the possible impacts of creating an OECE in the Department of Education ([Attachment 46](#)).

Chairperson Chronister requested that Dr. Marcia Nielsen be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss the role of the Health Policy Authority in early childhood programs.

Chairperson Chronister asked the Kansas Department of Education to review the proposals of Dr. Daniels and Ms. Hinton and provide a response at the next 2010 Commission meeting.

Chairperson Chronister also asked the Children's Cabinet to respond at the next meeting regarding an expanded role for the Early Learning Coordinating Council, including long-term planning, development of a single application for all programs, comprehensive data collection, and discussion of an organization structure designed to assist in the development of the whole child.

Chairperson Chronister expressed her reluctance to recommend something based only upon a three-month study. She also expressed the desire to include family day care providers, prenatal programming, and the youngest children (aged 0-3 years) in recommendations.

Chairperson Chronister announced the next 2010 Commission meeting will be held Thursday, September 13, 2007 and Friday, September 14, 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Prepared by Janet Henning
Edited by Sharon Wenger

Approved by Commission on:

September 13, 2007

(Date)